

VZCZCXRO5199  
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN RUEHTRO  
DE RUEHC #3072/01 3250006  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O P 192358Z NOV 08  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 3882  
INFO UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE PRIORITY 3191

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 STATE 123072

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [UNSC](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#) [XA](#) [ZU](#) [KDEM](#)  
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR UNSC CONSULTATIONS ON ZIMBABWE  
NOVEMBER 20

¶1. (U) This is an action request. USUN should draw from the statement in para 2 during the UN Security Council consultations on Zimbabwe November 20. USUN should also address the press after the UNSC briefing to summarize the key points from the U.S. statement. Additionally, USUN should hand to reporters the "Zimbabwe Fact Sheet" in para 3, which is available at:  
(<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/104399.htm>) End action.

¶2. (U) Begin points:

I would like to thank Assistant Secretary General Political Affairs Haile Menkerios for his briefing on the situation in Zimbabwe. Today, I would like to make three points.

First, the United States remains deeply concerned about the welfare of the Zimbabwean people given the increasingly dire humanitarian situation. We are concerned the reality and magnitude of the situation has gone underreported. Food insecurity will soon affect five million people. The healthcare system has collapsed as hospitals lack even the most basic supplies and are forced to close their doors. There are inadequate efforts and resources to address the cholera outbreaks in urban areas and NGOs report as many as 1.4 million may be at risk of contracting the disease. Human rights remain brutally restricted as government-sponsored political violence continues against MDC supporters and ordinary citizens, including unpaid doctors and nurses, exercising their right to peacefully protest conditions in their country. The U.S. continues to provide food and non-food humanitarian assistance, with no conditions attached.

Second, the United States notes more than nine weeks have passed since the September 15 signing of the Zimbabwe power-sharing Agreement, yet still there is no legitimate government. The United States believes the SADC proposal for ZANU-PF and MDC to share the Home Affairs Ministry contravenes the letter and spirit of the September 15 Agreement, as does Mugabe's unilateral appointment of government officials. Mugabe must accede to an equitable power-sharing arrangement that provides for a genuinely democratic transitional government that reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people as expressed in the March 29 elections and the spirit of the September 15 agreement.

Third, we urge all SADC member states to require Mugabe to honor his commitment to act in good faith and form an inclusive government with the MDC that can begin to address the urgent crises facing the people in Zimbabwe.

Lastly, we thank UN Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs Haile Menkerios for keeping the Council informed of developments in Zimbabwe.

¶3. DRL Factsheet on Zimbabwe:

As Talks Stall, Zimbabweans Suffer

In violation of both the September 15 power-sharing agreement between political parties and the will of the Zimbabwean people as expressed in the March 29 elections, Zimbabwe remains without a legitimate government, causing further suffering to its people. Twenty-one African leaders witnessed the signing of the accord between Mugabe,s ZANU-PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Since then, the Mugabe regime has refused to implement an equitable and inclusive government and has continued to use violence against peaceful demonstrators.

In the face of condemnation by the international community, including United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, human rights violations in 2008 have more than tripled from 2007, and there are signs that the violence may again be increasing. The Mugabe regime continues to brutally restrict basic freedoms through state-sponsored violence. Security forces refuse to allow peaceful demonstrations by democratic groups to proceed, often using batons and tear gas to violently disperse gatherings. Just last month, two peaceful marches protesting Zimbabwe,s humanitarian crisis and crumbling infrastructure, each attended by over 200 members of civil society, were disrupted by police who resorted to both beatings and arrests to disperse civilians. NGOs report that violence could escalate further at any time. Due to the intransigence of the regime, the humanitarian crisis worsens. Zimbabweans struggle to survive in an economy

STATE 00123072 002 OF 003

that has been decimated by malfeasance, corruption and inaction. Facing the highest inflation in the world, many citizens have resorted to a barter system. Unemployment is the norm. The Mugabe regime continues to impede humanitarian access, despite warnings that over 5 million Zimbabweans may go hungry in the coming months.

#### Attacks

190 opposition activists and supporters have been murdered since the March 29 election.

Violence continues at significantly higher rates than seen before the March 29 election. Although overall violence has decreased from the highest levels seen during the inter-election period from May-July, it may again be escalating.

In October alone, at least 1,300 incidents of politically-motivated violence or harassment by ZANU-PF members or supporters against the opposition have been documented by independent organizations, who note an increase from August and September.

Politically-motivated rape by ZANU-PF against opposition supporters has occurred. According to media reports, women were held as sex slaves at ZANU-PF camps. Several victims state they were held against their will and raped multiple times a day. Some of the perpetrators of these crimes are reportedly ZANU-PF officials holding elected office.

NGOs report that in some rural areas, ZANU-PF &hit squads<sup>8</sup> and youth militia continue to act with impunity to intimidate and harass civilians.

#### Illegal Arrest and Detention

The MDC reports that several of its activists remain in police custody on trumped up charges. For example, in late October twelve MDC activists in Mashonaland West were arrested by security forces on charges of receiving training in sabotage, terrorism and banditry. Police also took one activist,s two-year-old daughter into custody. The detainees have been held incommunicado for over two weeks and their location remains unknown. Despite repeated attempts by lawyers, the detainees have had no access to legal counsel or medical care. On November 11, a High Court judge issued four orders, including to the Minister of Home Affairs and the Police Commissioner-General, demanding they produce the activists in court. The government has not complied.

The National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) sponsored peaceful demonstrations in five cities on November 11, four of which were broken up violently by riot police who arrested over two dozen protesters. Police detained NCA Chairman

Love more Madhuku for four hours, keeping him from a Harare demonstration.

After three weeks in jail following their arrest for peacefully protesting the crisis in Zimbabwe, Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlang, both leaders of the NGO Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), were granted bail on November 4. Upon their release, they shared stories of worsening conditions and food shortages in the country's prisons. On November 16, Amnesty International's German Section awarded WOZA its 5th Annual Human Rights Award.

On November 18, riot police disrupted a peaceful attempt by an estimated 1,000 medical staff, including doctors and nurses, to protest the country's deteriorating healthcare system. The protesters planned to present a petition to the government calling for urgent action to address the crisis. Police reportedly blocked staff from leaving the main hospital in Harare to join the march and threatened those who continued demonstrating with arrest. Humanitarian Emergency

The number of hungry Zimbabweans is expected to rise to over 5 million in early 2009. Millions of Zimbabweans have already run out of food or are surviving on just one meal a day. International aid agencies are being forced to reduce daily rations in order to stretch their remaining supplies. There are widespread reports of citizens in rural areas scavenging for wild fruits and roots. A poor summer harvest, hyperinflation, the lack of foreign exchange to import food and the previous ban on NGO activities have led to an acute food crisis. The winter harvest is forecast to be less than one tenth of the local consumption requirement.

The number of Zimbabweans seeking asylum in South Africa exceeded 2007's total figure in the first quarter of 2008 alone, according to experts. An estimated three million Zimbabweans have left for South Africa and neighboring countries over the past decade seeking both economic opportunity as well as political asylum.

While health care in Zimbabwe was once amongst the best in Africa, it has declined dramatically, a trend which has accelerated in recent months. Public hospitals lack water, electricity, soap, and even basic medical supplies, forcing many hospitals to refuse patients treatment. Untold numbers of Zimbabweans have died as a result. Even private hospitals now have limited resources, as medications and supplies,

STATE 00123072 003 OF 003

where available, must be purchased with scarce foreign currency.

Even as Zimbabwe's health care system collapses, news broke in November that Zimbabwe's Reserve Bank &diverted8 over \$7 million donated to the country by the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. The Bank has since returned the funds.

Outbreaks of cholera are plaguing communities across Zimbabwe. Five separate outbreaks have resulted in 2,893 cases of cholera and at least 115 deaths since August. Doctors Without Borders has warned that another 1.4 million people are at risk.

The quality of Zimbabwe's once thriving education sector continued to erode, resulting in a loss of teachers, suspension of national exams, inflationary increases in school fees, and the postponement of the university semester. In November, teachers' unions called for the cancellation of the entire academic year. Economic Meltdown

Inflation continues its unprecedented rise. Official regime figures placed the July inflation rate at 231,000,000%. Independent economists estimate inflation in November at over 13,000,000,000%. According to one economist, prices now double every 1.3 days. At this rate, the annual inflation rate will surpass the world record by the end of 2008. As a result, the cash economy has largely collapsed, replaced by barter and foreign currency, neither of which permits most Zimbabweans access to desperately needed goods and services.

The impact of hyperinflation is devastating. Those fortunate enough to be employed now find that insurance companies can no longer afford to cover even urgent medical

care, including surgery and dialysis. Salaries cannot keep pace with the skyrocketing increase in fuel, electricity, and food prices.

The World Bank estimates that just six percent of the working-age population is employed in the formal sector. The majority of Zimbabweans are now working informally or not at all.

Amid fuel shortages, gasoline prices have soared, raising the price of a one-way bus trip to more than the average daily wage.

Power and water outages occur daily across large swaths of the city, placing large sectors of the population at serious risk. In some communities that have gone without water for months or years, citizens have dug crude shallow wells in which water sometimes mixes with sewage flowing from broken sewer pipes. These practices contribute to cholera and other disease outbreaks.

Shelves at shops that sell in local currency are bare, as price controls do not allow retailers to recoup their costs or replace goods. Basic commodities such as milk and meat are only available in foreign currency shops or on the black market at exorbitant prices.

RICE